

6 C C P Y

OF THE 1480. aa. 13.

# CRAFTSMAN,

Containing an

ABSTRACT of the Act

AGAINST P. P. London.  
The Craftsman.

*Bribery and Corruption.*

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T H E  
**CRAFTSMAN,**  
 CONTAINING  
 An Abstract of the *ACT* against  
 BRIBERY *and* CORRUPTION.



**A**S the *present Parliament* is now drawing very near its Dissolution, and the Preservation of our Liberties depends entirely on the proper Choice of a *new one*, it is my Duty to address the *Electors* of *Great Britain* on so important an Occasion. I shall therefore begin with an Abstract of the late Act of Parliament, *for the more effectual preventing* BRIBERY *and* CORRUPTION,

TION, with a few short explanatory Comments upon it.

It is set forth, in the Preamble, \* ‘ That the  
 ‘ Laws already in Being, have been found, by  
 ‘ Experience, not to be sufficient to prevent *cor-*  
 ‘ *rupt and illegal Practices in the Election of Mem-*  
 ‘ *bers to serve in Parliament* ; for the Remedy  
 ‘ therefore of so great an Evil, and to the End  
 ‘ that all Elections of Members to Parliament  
 ‘ may hereafter be *freely and indifferently made,*  
 ‘ *without Charge or Expence,* it is enacted, that  
 ‘ after the 24th of *June 1729.* upon every Elec-  
 ‘ tion of Members to serve for the Commons in  
 ‘ Parliament, every Freeholder, Citizen, Free-  
 ‘ man, Burgess, or Person having a Right to  
 ‘ vote, or be polled at such Election, shall, be-  
 ‘ fore he is admitted to poll, take the following  
 ‘ *Oath,* (or, being a *Quaker,* the *solemn Affirma-*  
 ‘ *tion*) if demanded by either of the Candidates,  
 ‘ or any two of the *Electors,* viz.

‘ I, A. B. do swear (or being one of the People  
 ‘ called *Quakers,* I, A. B. do solemnly affirm) I have  
 ‘ not received, or had, by my self, or any other Per-  
 ‘ son whatsoever, in Trust for me, or for my Use  
 ‘ and Benefit, directly or indirectly, any Sum or  
 ‘ Sums of Money, Office, Place, or Employment,  
 ‘ Gift, or Reward, or any Promise or Security for  
 ‘ any Money, Office, Employment, or Gift, in order  
 ‘ to

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\* See the *Act*, 2. *Geo. II.*



‘ to give my Vote at this Election, and that I have  
 ‘ not been polled at this Election.

‘ Which Oath or Affirmation, the Officer pre-  
 ‘ siding, or taking the Poll, is to administer gra-  
 ‘ tis, if demanded, on Pain of 50 L. to be reco-  
 ‘ vered with full Costs, by Action of Debt, &c.  
 ‘ at *Westminster*; and if the Offence be commit-  
 ‘ ted in *Scotland*, then to be recovered by sum-  
 ‘ mary Action, or Complaint, before the Court of  
 ‘ Session, or by Prosecution before the Court of  
 ‘ Justiciary there; and none shall be admitted to  
 ‘ poll, till he hath taken the said Oath, if de-  
 ‘ manded, before the returning Officer, or others  
 ‘ deputed by him.

‘ The Sheriff, or other returning Officer, ad-  
 ‘ mitting any to be polled, without taking the  
 ‘ Oath, or Affirmation, if demanded, shall incur  
 ‘ the like Penalty.

These Provisions are so clear and strong a-  
 gainst the *Electors*, as well as the *returning Officers*,  
 that they require no Explanation. It is farther  
 required by the Act, ‘ That every Sheriff and re-  
 ‘ turning Officer shall, immediately after reading  
 ‘ the *Writ*, take the following Oath, viz.

I, A. B. do solemnly swear, that I have not, di-  
 ‘ rectly nor indirectly, received any Sum or Sums of  
 ‘ Money, Office, Place, or Employment, Gratuity, or  
 ‘ Reward, or any Bond, Bill, or, Note, or any Pro-  
 ‘ mise, or Gratuity whatsoever, either by my self,  
 ‘ or any other Person to my Use, or Benefit, or Ad-  
 ‘ vantage, for making any Return at the present E-  
 ‘ lection

‘ *lection of Members to serve in Parliament; and*  
 ‘ *that I will return such Person or Persons, as*  
 ‘ *shall, to the best of my Judgment, appear to me to*  
 ‘ *have the MAJORITY OF LEGAL VOTES.*

‘ *Such Votes shall be deemed legal, which have*  
 ‘ *been so declared by the last Determination of the*  
 ‘ *House of Commons.*

‘ *If any returning Officer, Elector, or Person*  
 ‘ *taking the Oath, or Affirmation, shall be*  
 ‘ *guilty of wilful Perjury, or false Affirming, and*  
 ‘ *be thereof convicted by due Course of Law, he*  
 ‘ *shall incur the Pains and Penalties inflicted in*  
 ‘ *Cases of wilful Perjury.*

‘ *None convicted of Perjury shall, after Con-*  
 ‘ *viction, be capable of voting in any Election of*  
 ‘ *Members to serve in Parliament.*

I shall only observe, upon these Clauses, that  
 as the strongest Obligations are laid upon all  
*Electors* and *returning Officers*, which can be laid  
 upon them by any human Laws, as *honest Men,*  
*Freemen, Britons* and *Christians*, so they are re-  
 strain’d, by the *severest Penalties*, from acting con-  
 trary to them; and no Man, who hath any Re-  
 gard to *Conscience, Interest, or Reputation*, will pre-  
 sume to fly in the Face of so *explicite a Law.*

This Point is farther explained by the follow-  
 ing Clauses, which enact,

‘ *That if any Person, who hath, or claimeth a*  
 ‘ *Right to vote in any such Election, shall ask or*  
 ‘ *take any Money, or other Reward, by Way of*  
 ‘ *Gift, Loan, or other Device, or contract so to*  
 ‘ *do, to give his Vote, or to refuse or forbear to*  
 ‘ *give*

' give his Vote; or, if any Person by himself,  
 ' or any one employed by him, shall, by Gift,  
 ' or Reward, Promise, Agreement, or Security,  
 ' *corrupt*, or *procure* any one to give his Vote, or  
 ' to forbear to give his Vote, in any such Elec-  
 ' tion, he shall forfeit, for *every such Offence*, the  
 ' Sum of 500 L. to be recovered as before di-  
 ' rected, with full Costs; and every Person, after  
 ' Judgment obtain'd against him, shall for ever  
 ' be disabled to vote in any Election, or to hold  
 ' any Office, or Franchise, as a Member of any  
 ' City, Borough, Town-corporate, or Cinque-  
 ' Port.

' If any Person offending against *this Act* shall,  
 ' within Twelve Months next after such Electi-  
 ' on, discover any other Person *offending*, so that  
 ' he be convicted, such Person, not having been  
 ' before that Time convicted himself, shall be in-  
 ' demnified from all *Penalties* and *Disabilities*  
 ' which he shall then have incurred.

These Clauses are not only a stronger Restraint  
 on the *Electors*, but lay a very heavy Penalty on  
 the *Agents of Corruption*, who are liable to a For-  
 feiture of *Five hundred Pounds*, besides the *Inca-*  
*pacities* before mentioned, for every *individual*  
 Man whom they *corrupt*, or *procure* to vote, or  
 to *forbear* voting, in any Election; and as a far-  
 ther Terror to these Men, every *corrupted Elector*  
 hath the Power of indemnifying himself from  
 all the *Penalties* of this Act, within Twelve  
 Months, by discovering the *Corrupter*, and bring-  
 ing him to condign Punishment. It is therefore  
 hoped, that every *Briton* who desires to see a free  
 Par-



Parliament, will keep a watchful Eye upon all reputed Borough-Jobbers, and Brokers of Elections, who prowle about the Country on these vile Errands, and earn the infamous Wages of Corruption, by endeavouring to destroy the Liberty of our antient Constitution. Let them remember that these Causes are to be try'd by a Jury in Westminster-Hall, where we have the Happiness of such Judges, at present, as have given us very hopeful Promises, that they will prefer the impartial Execution of the Laws to any Considerations of Interest or Ambition.

The remaining Provisions in this Law are to the following Effect, viz.

‘ That all Sheriffs and other Officers shall, at the Time of Election, immediately after reading the *Writ* or *Precept*, read, or cause to be read openly, before the Electors, this present Act, and every Clause therein; That it shall also be read once in every Year at the Quarter-Sessions next after *Easter*, and at the Election of the chief Magistrate in any Borough, Town-corporate, or Cinque-Port, as well as at the Election of Magistrates and Town-Counsellors for every Borough in Scotland.

‘ That all Sheriffs or other Officers shall forfeit the Sum of 50 L. for every wilful Offence against this Act.

And, lastly, ‘ That no Person shall be made liable to any Incapacity or Forfeiture, unless Prosecution be commenced within two Years after such Incapacity or Penalty shall be incurred,

‘ or,



‘ or, in Case of a Prosecution, unless the same  
‘ shall be carried on without any *wilful Delay*.

Such are the Provisions of this excellent and truly glorious Act, which is so far from being *oppressive* or *terrible*, as the *ministerial Writers* have represented it, that the Preservation of our *Liberties* depends on the Execution of it. Indeed, *Hirelings*, and particularly the *Couranteers*, have often threatned us with a Critick upon it, and endeavoured to cajole the lower Part of the Nation, by pleading for *Corruption* as one of their Privileges. But I shall never be afraid, or ashamed to justify the Intention of this Law, and heartily wish, that it may be put strictly in Force, without any Regard to *Parties* or *Persons whatsoever*.

It is certainly the Interest of all *Country Gentlemen* to fulfil this Design of the Legislature, as the only effectual Method to defeat the Practices of *Stockjobbers*, *Placemen*, *Pensioners*, and other *Upstarts*, who bribe them out of their neighbouring Boroughs, where they have a natural Right to be chosen, and would be chosen in a *free Election*.

It is likewise demonstrable, that even the *meanest Electors* would soon find their Account in destroying this Practice; for, if we look round the Kingdom, we shall find, that *Venality* is the constant Forerunner of *Poverty*, and that the *most corrupt Boroughs* are always the *most beggarly*. I believe no Body will pretend to deny, that the Abolition of a few Taxes on the common Necessaries of Life, such as *Salt*, *Soap*, *Candles*, and  
*Leather*,

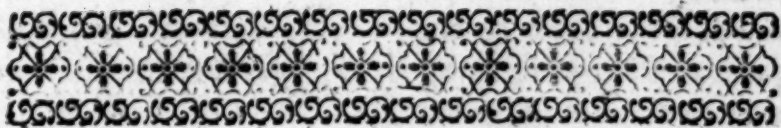
*Leather*, would be of more real and lasting Benefit to the People, than what they can ever propose to get by *Bribery*; besides the Prostitution of their *Consciences*, the Loss of their *Reputations*, and the *Penalties* they incur by such a *scandalous Traffick*.

I shall therefore conclude with my earnest Wishes and sincere Advice, that even the *poorest Boroughs* will purge themselves from the Infamy of being; as Bishop *Burnet* calls them, † *the rotten Part of our Constitution*, and co-operate with the *Counties, Cities, and great Corporations*, in procuring us the Blessing of a FREE AND UNCORRUPT PARLIAMENT.

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† *Burnet's History of his own Times*, Vol. II. Page 295.





T O

# Caleb D'Anvers, Esq;

S I R,

**C**ICERO, in the second Book of his *Offices*, highly commends a wise and handsom Rebuke, which *Philip* of *Macedon* gave his Son *Alexander*, for foolishly attempting to gain the Affections of the *Macedonians* by *Bribery*. He wrote his Son a Letter upon it, in these Words. ‘*Quæ, te, mæ- lum! Ratio in istam spem induxit, ut eos tibi fideles putares fore, quos pecuniâ corrupisses? An tu id agis, ut Macedones non te regem suum, sed ministrum & præbitorem sperent fore?*’ — *Tully* makes this Remark upon it. — ‘*Bene ministrum & præbitorem; quia sordidum regi. Melius etiam, quod largitionem corruptelam esse dixit. Fit enim deterior, qui accipit, atque ad idem semper expectandum paratior.*

*Philip* was, undoubtedly, the greatest Prince of his Time. He was wise, artful, and fortunate.

nate. The Advice of such a King, while he was forming the Mind of a young Prince, who afterwards gave Law to the World, deserves our Regard. This wise King had observed in his Son many noble Principles, the Seeds of Greatness, but ill conducted, through Youth and Inexperience. *Alexander* was young, valiant and generous; but an Excess, or Misapplication of Valour and Generosity, often leads to the greatest Inconveniencies. That his Generosity might take a good and useful Turn, he writes him this short, but important Epistle. 'What Notion is this, *says he*, that you have got in your Head? Can you imagine the Fidelity and Affection of the Subject are to be acquired by *Bribery and Corruption*? Or, Is this your Motive, That the *Macedonians* may not consider you as One who is to be their Sovereign, but a Minister to their *Extravagance and Corruption*?

*Tully's* Observation is equally fine. 'Tis sordid and mean, *says he*, below the Dignity of a great King, to court the Affection of his People with *base Bribes*.' True Love and Esteem are built upon a quite different Foundation. 'Largeesses, or the giving of Money, as the same Author observes, is *Corruption* itself; for the Receiver becomes a worse Man, and is always apt to increase his Demands.' — This Maxim of *Philip* is certainly one of the wisest in the whole System of Politicks, and likewise consistent with the strictest Rules of Morality; that a King, giving Bribes to his own Subjects, renders himself mean



mean and sordid; that He never gains the true Affection of one Person by it; that He subjects himself to the arbitrary Will and fantastical Government of *such Prostitutes*; and that his very Crown is at their Disposal to the \* *highest Bidder*.

The Immorality of it is likewise evident; for such Proceedings, when generally known, debauch the Morals of a whole People. The *same Depravity and Corruption* soon find their Way from a Court to a Cottage; and, in Proportion to the Distance, is to be traced in a greater or less Degree through every private Family; so that, in a short Time, the very Name of Virtue may come to be lost in such a Kingdom. It is very probable that *Philip* might not regard this Maxim in the *moral View*; for, if we may credit the *Greek Historians and Orators*, He was not apt to guide his Actions by the Rules of a *nice Morality*. He is generally drawn by Them as *cunning and designing*; and, though a warlike Prince, no Man knew the Weight of *Money* more than He, as well as how and where to apply it. His usual Method of *Bribery*, was to buy an *Enemy's General*, and sometimes a *convenient Town or Fortrefs*: by which Means he artfully avoided risking his own Glory, and the Lives of his Subjects. He carried it so far, that just before the decisive Victory at *Charonea*, the very Priestess of *Apollo* at *Delphis*,

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\* See *Wolffius and Grævius*, upon this Passage of *Cicero*.

*Delphis* was strongly suspected to have been tampered with by that *Prince*; for the confederate Army, who were then going to engage for the common Liberties of *Greece*, could get no Manner of Encouragement from her, so that *Demoſthenes*, who well knew the Avarice of *Priests*, and their jugglig Tricks, might eaſily gueſs, that *Philip* had ſecured the Oracle. At another Time, a grave looking Demagogue of *Athens*, who had long bawld at the exorbitant Power of the King of *Macedon*, was at Length prevail'd upon, and took the Reward of his Treachery with great Complaiſance.

THESE were the ſucceſſful Arts which he uſed Abroad; and by ſuch Intrigues he often defeated the ſtrongeſt Confederacies of all *Greece*. His Adminiſtration was wiſe, dreaded Abroad, and reſpected at Home. What Occaſion could he have to *penſion his own Subjects*? Their Love and Eſteem was founded upon the real Conviction of the Excellency of his Government, and not upon that ſlippery Foundation of *Corruption*. He kept them honeſt, by not tempting them to be otherwiſe. Even in a *juſt Cauſe*, a *Gift* perverts the Mind; and, as *Tully* well obſerves upon this Place, 'the *Receiver* immediately becomes a *bad Man*, and is always expecting 'greater *Bribes*.' The Plunder of a whole People is ſcarce ſufficient. To this Honesty of the *Macedonians*, confirm'd by their King, is to be attributed their true Greatneſs of Mind, and perſonal Courage. The Name of *Barbarians*, which the over wiſe *Greeks* were too apt to be-  
flow

flow upon their Neighbours, now left them, even by the Confession of those very *Greeks*, who, in a General Assembly of their several confederate Republicks, soon after placed *Alexander* at the Head of that grand Alliance, which gave him and his *Macedonians* the Empire of the World.

From the whole, it is clearly evident, that an *unpension'd Subject* will give the wisest Counsel to his Prince, and will always continue the most faithful to him. It is the true Interest of the Prince to have such about him as will not flatter him, and be Slaves to his *Passions*, for the Sake of his *Money*. The greatest Danger that can happen to a Prince, will arise from such of his own *Servants*, as from their own corrupt Principles would sell him and his Counsels to the common Enemy. *Treason* is, too often, the fatal Attendant upon *Corruption*. A Government may be conducted with the greatest Security, without employing these *pecuniary Arts* at Home; for a wise Administration will always stand upon its own Legs, and support itself without the Assistance of *Gold*. It can raise a whole People, almost from a State of *Barbarity*, to the Height of Greatness and heroick Virtue.

*I am, Sir, &c.*



